

MOTOR VEHICLE CRASH RATES AND RISKS, 1993-1995

- In 1995, the motor vehicle crash rate for Tennessee was 33.1 per 1,000 population.
- Total crashes increased by 10% statewide from 1993 through 1995.
- In 1995, Davidson County had the highest crash rate (43.9), while the Northwest Region of Tennessee had the lowest rate (23.1).
- Metropolitan areas had higher crash rates than nonmetropolitan and rural areas in 1995.
- Controlling for driving exposure, Madison and Shelby Counties and Southwest Tennessee had the most crashes per million vehicle miles driven (MVM) in 1995.
- Sullivan County, East Tennessee and Southeast Tennessee had the fewest crashes per MVM in 1995.
- For 1995, the true cost of highway crashes totaled more than \$6.5 billion. These costs included \$2.0 billion in direct costs (property and injuries) and \$4.5 billion in “lost quality of life”.
- In 1995, the average Tennessee crash cost \$40,000 in direct and indirect costs.
- In 1995, Southwest Tennessee crashes cost the most at \$73,000 per average crashes, while Hamilton County crashes cost the least at \$27,000 per average crash.
- In 1995, seatbelts were not worn in 18% of crashes.
- Crash severity increased as seatbelt use declined, suggesting the importance of seatbelts in reducing crash injury and fatalities.
- In 1995, metropolitan regions of Tennessee had higher seatbelt usage rates than rural regions and counties.
- Highest seatbelt use in highway crashes in 1995 was in Shelby County (90%), Knox County (87%), Montgomery County (86%) and Hamilton County (86%).
- The lowest seatbelt use in 1995 highway crashes was in Hancock County (45%) followed by Lake County (49%) and Pickett County (50%).
- Crashes reported as alcohol-related decreased as a percentage of total crashes from 7.6% in 1993 to 6.6% in 1995.
- In 1995, the region with the highest proportion of crashes that were reported as alcohol-related was South Central Tennessee at 9.7%. The region with the lowest proportion was Shelby County at 4%.
- Rural areas had a higher proportion of crashes that were either alcohol-related or were single vehicle, late night crashes involving male drivers under 35 years of age, which are indicators of high risk for alcohol involvement.
- The largest decline in alcohol-involved crashes from 1993-1995 occurred among male drivers aged 21 to 34 years.

Source: Tennessee Highway Crash Data Base, Tennessee Department of Safety, 1993-1995.